

[Eric Weber](#)

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July 31: Birth date of Capt. Abel **Thayer** (1740-1814), b. Braintree, MA and one of Williamsburg's earliest settlers. He m. 1759 Dorothy Curtis (1741-?), b. Stoughton, d/o Edward 4 & Hannah (Hayward) Curtis. She bore him eleven children, at least seven of whom lived to maturity and at least one of whom did not. She was almost certainly the "Widow Dorothy Thayer" of Wmsb. who on 7/16/1818 deeded half of a pew in the meetinghouse to Dr. Daniel Collins.

Capt. Abel Thayer lived high on Gere Hill in the place later owned by the Gere family, on the present site of Bill and Debbie Turner's home. He served in the Revolution from the very first alarm out of Lexington, leading the ten local men he had been drilling when the call came in April 1775. He was taken prisoner in Brooklyn, NY in 1776, imprisoned on a ship on the Jersey flats, and eventually exchanged. He was a cordwainer (shoemaker) by trade, and owned a farm of considerable size. He became prominent in Wmsb., serving as Selectman, constable and sealer of leather.

There were more bearers of the Thayer surname in Williamsburg from 1780 until around 1850 than any other surname. Many Thayer siblings and cousins had come here from Braintree by 1780, and thanks to the huge families of the era, there were soon well over a hundred Thayers in town. There are still some Thayer descendants here, but I don't think a single person lives here today whose surname is Thayer.